

EPI Update for Friday, August 29, 2014

Center for Acute Disease Epidemiology (CADE)

Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH)

Items for this week's EPI Update include:

- **Iowa epidemiologist concludes work in Sierra Leone Ebola outbreak**
- **West Nile virus case count update**
- **24/7 phone number needed for rabies test**
- **Typhoid fever still common and deadly worldwide**
- **Meeting announcements and training opportunities**

Iowa epidemiologist concludes work in Sierra Leone Ebola outbreak

After working with CDC in Sierra Leone for nearly four weeks to track and stop the spread of Ebola, Samir Koirala (an epidemiologist with IDPH) is coming home. Much of his work involved assisting local officials with surveillance and data collection. His latest communication from Sierra Leone:

We have trained the local data manager on a database system we provided, which he is now using and is also trying to enter the back log of data on Ebola cases into the database. Once all the data are entered, I will be cleaning it and verifying it before I leave. I will be presenting the data results at the Emergency Operations Center and at a task force meeting to demonstrate how important and useful the updated database is for the surveillance. This data will provide those involved in stopping this outbreak with Epi curves, identify hot spots in their district, the number of cases, number of contacts (people potentially exposed to cases), how many people are being followed-up, the number in quarantine, etc.

Our main goal is to get this system in place so that it can keep working and updating data even after we leave. So, we are working hard to convince people of the importance of data collection and management, because it not only is a key part of surveillance, but assists in the containment and control of this virus.

IDPH will provide more information about Dr. Samir's work in Sierra Leone after his return to Iowa. For more information about his trip and Ebola, visit www.facebook.com/IowaDepartmentOfPublicHealth/ and www.cdc.gov/vhf/ebola/.

West Nile virus case count update

Seven cases of West Nile virus (WNV) are confirmed in Iowa: one case each in Buchanan, Clay, Crawford, Monona, Plymouth, Sioux and Woodbury counties. Additional cases are being investigated in Sac and Shelby counties. Two of the confirmed cases were hospitalized, but are now recovering at home. Late summer and autumn are the times when mosquitoes carrying West Nile virus are most likely to be circulating. Prevention includes using insect repellent with DEET, picaridin, IR3535, or oil of lemon eucalyptus when outdoors; and draining standing water to eliminate mosquito breeding areas. Learn more at <http://bit.ly/1q8WlXQ>.

24/7 phone number needed for rabies test

Last weekend, an animal was submitted to the State Hygienic Laboratory (SHL) for rabies testing and was positive. Unfortunately, the number listed for the health care provider on the submission form was only answered during office hours (and did not provide an emergency number); thus, we had no way of letting the health care provider know that their patient needed immediate rabies post-exposure prophylaxis (vaccine and rabies immune globulin).

All specimen submissions must include a completed request form, with a phone number to a physician or veterinarian that is answered 24 hours a day, seven days a week. This way, results can be provided quickly, even on evenings and weekends. For information on submitting an animal for rabies testing, visit www.shl.uiowa.edu/kitsquotesforms/rabiescollectioninstructions.pdf.

Typhoid fever still common and deadly worldwide

Approximately 5,700 cases of typhoid fever occur in the U.S. each year. This illness is caused by the bacterium *Salmonella Typhi* and about 75 percent of infections are acquired while traveling to Africa, Asia, and Latin America. This disease affects over 21 million people worldwide each year.

Symptoms include a sustained fever (can be as high as 104 degrees F), weakness, stomach pains, constipation in adults, lack of appetite, headache, and sometimes a rose-colored rash. Even without symptoms, a patient can carry and spread the potentially deadly bacteria, especially by handling food with unwashed hands (*remember Typhoid Mary?*).

Prevention includes vaccination and care with how foods are prepared while traveling. For more information on typhoid fever, visit www.cdc.gov/nczved/divisions/dfbmd/diseases/typhoid_fever/.

Meeting announcements and training opportunities

No meeting announcements or training opportunities this week.

Have a healthy and happy Labor Day Weekend!

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